

debt. This is particularly important for young adults who are bombarded by credit applications and have limited knowledge about the risks that accompany credit card ownership.

Further, the legislation will move child support and alimony payments up to the top of debt repayment priority lists. This will help prevent children from being unnecessarily hurt by the debt of their parents. The National Child Support Enforcement Association, the National District Attorneys Association and the Child Support Council all support this provision and this legislation.

In addition, this legislation will make permanent Chapter 12 bankruptcy provisions that provide relief to our family farmers. I have consistently supported temporary extensions of Chapter 12 bankruptcy protection because our nation's family farmers face unique circumstances that often pose unique financial risks outside their control. In Wisconsin, this situation has had the unfortunate affect of driving family farmers out of business at a rate of nearly five per day.

The crisis in our agricultural economy is not contained to Wisconsin alone. In fact, the Bureau of Labor Statistics projects a 13% decline in farmers between 1998 and 2008. This is the largest projected decline of any occupational category in the U.S. economy.

The permanent extension of Chapter 12 protections contained in this bill will allow family farmers facing bankruptcy to reorganize their debt so they do not lose their farms to creditors. Chapter 12 gives hope to financially-strapped farmers who feel that they have nowhere else to turn. It gives them room to recover from an economic crunch and still hold on to their livelihood—and it has proven to work.

According to one study, 74 percent of family farmers who filed Chapter 12 bankruptcy are still farming, and 61 percent of farmers who went through Chapter 12 believe it was helpful in getting them back on their feet. This protection is critical right now, during this depressed economy, because many cash-strapped producers are under pressure to meet operating expenses and pay off bank notes. I am pleased the House is taking bipartisan action today to make permanent Chapter 12 protection for farmers, giving them the opportunity to reorganize their debts and preserve their farms for future generations.

While I have objections to the majority using legislation that would simply extend the farm bankruptcy provisions of Chapter 12 for six months, as a vehicle for any other legislation, I support final passage of this legislation. The overall benefits of the comprehensive bankruptcy reform and the permanent extension of Chapter 12 now included will provide needed protection to consumers and relief to those in need. I urge my colleagues' support.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TERRY EVERETT

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 3, 2004

Mr. EVERETT. Mr. Speaker, due to the flu, I was unable to vote during the following roll

call votes on January 28th. However, if I had been present, I would have voted as indicated below.

Roll Call No. 8 (On Agreeing to the Baldwin Amendment)—no; Roll Call No. 9 (On Motion To Recommit with Instructions)—no; Roll Call No. 10 (On Passage of S 1920)—yes; Roll Call No. 11 (On Motion to Instruct Conferees)—no.

HONORING LINDA LEY

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 3, 2004

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my good friend and fellow Nevadan Linda Ley on her retirement from CASA, the Court Appointed Special Advocate for Children's office. Linda has dedicated her life to ensuring that the youngest and most powerless members of our society have someone looking out for their best interests and who cares that they are able to find a better life.

During my years in the Nevada legislature I worked closely with Linda to develop legislation that helped foster children transition into adulthood, and to protect victims of abuse and neglect. I urge the members of this House to join with me in wishing her well in her retirement, and to join her in her call for more volunteers to advocate on behalf of children.

CONGRATULATING ROMALO M. "CAP" CAPOVILLA

HON. JOHN T. DOOLITTLE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 3, 2004

Mr. DOOLITTLE. Mr. Speaker, today I wish to congratulate my friend, Romalo M. "Cap" Capovilla, as he celebrates his 80th birthday. His has been a lifetime of hard work and service.

Cap was born in Dunsmuir, California, on January 4, 1924, to immigrant parents. After graduating from Dunsmuir High School in 1942, he joined the U.S. Army Air Force. He served honorably for three years, through the end of World War II.

After his military service, Cap returned to Dunsmuir and worked as a railroad conductor for 27 years. He also owned and operated a cattle ranch for 20 years.

Mr. Speaker, Cap has long been very involved in issues related to natural resources management and agriculture. He became a member of the Shasta River Water Association in 1981. He also belonged to the Siskiyou County Cattlemen's Association, the California Cattlemen's Association, and the California Farm Bureau. He used his expertise in these areas to benefit youth. In fact, he received recognition for meritorious service to 4-H and worked many years at the junior auction.

In 1986, Cap was honored to be part of a 35-person delegation that delivered a 50-foot tall tree to Washington, DC, which became the first national Christmas tree from West of the Mississippi River.

Cap has contributed greatly to life in rural Northern California both civically and politically. In 1978, he was first elected as a member of the Siskiyou County Republican Central Committee. Two years later, he was elected to the Loan Committee of the Farmers Home Administration. For 30 years, he has been a member of the fraternal service organization, Knights of Columbus, and has served as Post Grand Knight. Additionally, he was named Knight of the Year in 1978 and 1998.

Cap is now enjoying retirement in Medford, Oregon, with his wife, Ruby.

Mr. Speaker, I take great pleasure in commending Cap Capovilla for his outstanding service to our country as a member of the Armed Forces, a community leader, and a good family man. I am personally thankful for his support and friendship.

HONORING MENTORS AND SUPPORTING EFFORTS TO RECRUIT MENTORS

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 21, 2004

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, as co-chair of the mentoring caucus, I rise in support of H. Res. 491. This bill expresses the sense of the House of Representatives regarding the benefits of mentoring.

Mentoring programs that link children and young adults with the greatest needs to responsible adults are a proven method to help our struggling children. One valuable mentoring program is Big Brothers Big Sisters. In the St. Paul/Minneapolis region alone, more than 3000 children benefit from this mentoring program.

According to Kari Davis, the executive director of the Mentoring Partnership of Minnesota:

Mentoring is about guiding and supporting young people so they can realize their highest dreams and potential. Minnesota maintains hundreds of quality youth mentoring programs that are community, school or workplace-based. With increased and sustained federal funding, mentoring programs can build their capacity to reach the 75,000 Minnesota young people who could benefit from a mentor.

I was so proud last night to have 2 outstanding people from Minnesota in the audience at the State of the Union last night. Little Brother David Moreno and Big Brother Jim Diesing were guests at last night's address. Paired together since 1998, their initial friendship has turned into more of a family bond. David is excelling in school, even taking an advanced math class. Jim has learned what is really important in life. They are a shining example of the good that comes from mentoring.

I encourage all of my colleagues to support this legislation and to look for opportunities to mentor themselves. I would like to thank the sponsor of this bill, Mr. OSBORNE from Nebraska, whose cousin the Honorable Kathleen Vellenga was a mentor of mine when I served in the Minnesota House of Representatives.